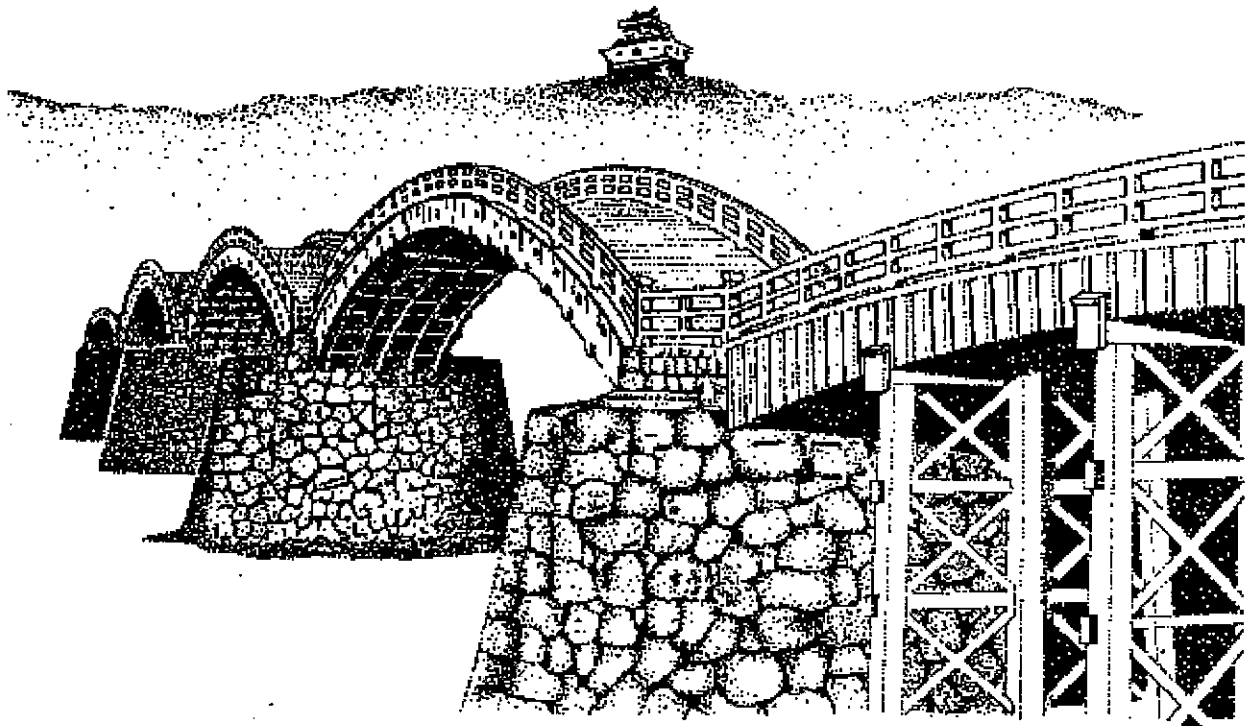


**STATEMENT OF LIVING AND  
WORKING CONDITIONS  
FOR CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES  
AT MCAS IWAKUNI, JAPAN**



**Civilian Human Resources Office**

**PSC 561 BOX 27**

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## **A. INTRODUCTION**

Life overseas presents numerous challenges and offers many unique opportunities to Americans who choose to take advantage of them. This Statement of Living and Working Conditions provides general information for prospective employees of the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni, Japan. It does not constitute a part of the Transportation Agreement. Although every effort has been made to cover areas of greatest interest, you may have questions which have not been answered. If you do, contact the person who has been designated as your sponsor, or write to the:

Civilian Human Resources Office  
MCB Smedley D. Bultler  
Iwakuni Satellite Office  
PSC 561 BOX 251  
FPO AP 96310-0251

## **B. MISSION AND VISION OF MCAS IWAKUNI**

The mission of the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni, Japan, is to provide facilities, materials, and to meet the requirements of: III MEF and tenant commands; contingency OPLANS; the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement with Japan; and, to respond to combat and humanitarian assistance utilizing the Marine Corps philosophy of continuous process improvement. Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni's Vision is to become the Corps' leading innovators, providing world-class customer service, enhanced quality of life, and dedicated support to the operational forces. As Team Iwakuni moves toward fulfilling the Vision for the Air Station, it is essential that we are all working with a common purpose. The revolution in business affairs that is occurring at Iwakuni is empowered through the application of Total Quality principles throughout our military and civilian employee populations. In order to achieve the highest level of transformation to a customer focused, most efficient organization, Team Iwakuni must possess a core Total Quality knowledge base and a shared commitment to cultural change. The Air Station's commitment to training in Total Quality, the 7 Habits & 4 Roles, and other leadership principles is fundamental in enabling individuals to understand, internalize, and practice the tenants of Total Quality, which ultimately contributes to our long-term success and the realization of our Vision.

## **C. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES**

Each American overseas has the important task of being a goodwill ambassador of the United States. The individual behavior of each American is the primary basis on which the local nationals form their opinions of the American national character. In turn, their opinion of Americans has a direct bearing on what they will do at the polls to support the

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Government's pro-American foreign policy. Your behavior, and that of your family members, is the subject of critical inspection. To be an unofficial goodwill ambassador to our hosts requires sincerity, cordiality, tact, and understanding. The Japanese national is an extremely friendly and likable person. S/he is formal with strangers, but also very cordial, and will appreciate the same treatment from you. It behooves us to adapt ourselves to the facilities of our hosts. Appreciation, not condescension, is the keystone to mutual understanding. If a U.S. citizen employee's conduct, whether on or off duty, or that of the employee's family members, should prove to be harmful to their continued presence in Japan, or if the Japanese government advises that the presence of a U.S. citizen in Japan is not desired, the employee may be reassigned to an appropriate position in the Continental United States under procedures applicable to the specific case.

## **D. THE AREA AND CLIMATE**

Japan consists of four major islands (which are home to over 90% of Japan's 123 million residents), the Rykyu Islands, and hundreds of smaller islands, mostly uninhabited. The four major islands are Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu, and Shikoku. Iwakuni is located on the south-eastern tip of Honshu, the most populous island of Japan. MCAS and the surrounding city of Iwakuni occupy an area which was originally two small towns and three villages. Since Iwakuni was the larger town, with a significant history dating to at least the 17th century, the five communities were incorporated into the city of Iwakuni in 1940. Today, Iwakuni's population is about 113,000.

The landscape of Iwakuni is characterized by abrupt shorelines and numerous small mountains and valleys. Since flat arable land is scarce, many cultivated rice and grain fields are terraced up the hills and mountains. Hillsides are heavily wooded with many varieties of pine, bamboo, and hardwood trees. Narrow highways hug the coastline, winding around the numerous small bays which penetrate Honshu's rugged coast. The Air Station is situated on a delta between the Imazu and Monzen rivers, which flow into the Inland Sea of Japan. The Inland Sea is itself a scenic attraction. From its source below Iwakuni north to Osaka, the Inland Sea has been designated a National Park by the Government of Japan.

Iwakuni is the site of the famous Kintai Bridge, one of the best-known wooden structures in Japan. Originally built in the 7<sup>th</sup> century by Lord Kikkawa, the feudal ruler of the region, the bridge has been destroyed twice by typhoons. Now restored, the Kintai Bridge has five graceful, wooden arches, spanning the Nishiki River. From the Kintai Bridge, it is a short walk to the restored Iwakuni Castle, ancient home of Lord Kikkawa, and to the spacious Iwakuni Park.

Although there are several large cities near Iwakuni which are easily accessible by private automobile, train, or bus, Hiroshima is the most notable one in many respects. Hiroshima is a cosmopolitan, modern city approximately 25 miles northeast of Iwakuni. It is an excellent city for shopping, cultural tours, and entertainment. It is famed, of

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course, for the Peace Park and Museum which preserve pictures and relics of the atomic explosion. Hiroshima is approximately one hour away by car and 50 minutes by train.

About halfway between Iwakuni and Hiroshima is the island of Miyajima, noted for its Itsukushima Shrine and giant "floating" Torii. One of the three sightseeing "musts" in Japan, Miyajima is the home of many ancient monuments and shrines of the Shinto and Buddhist religions.

In addition to these sites, many interesting sections of Japan are accessible to the Iwakuni traveler. Modern, convenient and prompt trains make it possible to visit many town and resort sites. Among the places within two to four hours travel are: Fukuoka and Moji, where distinctive Japanese goods are found; Beppu, which is noted for its variety of hot mineral baths and spas; and Shuhodo, which boasts the Orient's largest limestone caves. The Shinkansen, Japan's high-speed "bullet" train, makes travel to Tokyo (six hours) and Kyoto/Nara (three hours) comfortable and easy.

In many respects, Iwakuni's climate is similar to that of coastal North Carolina: winters are mild with little snow, and summers are warm and humid. Normally, the minimum temperature in January, the coldest month, is 34 degrees F., and the maximum is 47 degrees F., August has a mean maximum of 90 degrees F., and an average minimum of 75 degrees F. Relative humidity ranges from a mean of 69% in December to a mean of 82% in July and August. Rains are heavy during the rainy season, which falls between late May and mid-July, but residents welcome the moisture for crops and water supplies. Typhoons occasionally pass near Iwakuni, but rarely strikes the area directly.

## **E. JAPANESE LAW**

1. Applicability of Japanese Laws. U.S. civilian employees of MCAS are members of the United States Forces Japan. Accordingly, the terms and conditions of the US-Japan Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) apply to civilian employees and their accompanying family members. Under the terms of this agreement, all civilian and military members are subject to the protection and the obligations of the laws of Japan. Japanese civil authorities normally exercise primary jurisdiction for crimes or offenses committed off-Station, and for crimes or offenses committed against Japanese citizens aboard the Station. Furthermore, conduct which is prejudicial to good order and discipline would bring discredit to the United States in Japan, and it could adversely affect the Air Station's mission. All civilian employees and their family members are subject to the administrative authority of the Commanding Officer while they are in Japan.

2. Significant Differences in Japanese Law. Japan's Constitution, civil and criminal law, and administration of justice are similar in many respects to our own institutions and laws. While a civilian employee should seldom experience any legal confusion or inconvenience in Japan, it is interesting to note that there are some significant differences. Two major differences are:

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a. There is no trial by jury in Japan. Court cases are decided by one or more judges.

b. In criminal proceedings, both the prosecution and the defense have the right to appeal. Thus, lower courts decisions in favor of the defense can be appealed to higher courts by the prosecution. Personal conduct which conforms with U.S. law and generally accepted customs will normally meet both the requirements of Japanese law and the expectations of civil authorities.

3. Legal Provisions Relating to Specific Matters of Interest

a. **Automobiles.** You are permitted to own and operate motor vehicles in Japan (see Section N.2. below). All driving, both on and off Station, is done on the left side of the road. Your travel orders may authorize you to bring a vehicle at government expense. Only vehicles manufactured prior to 1976 may be imported to Japan. If you do not bring an automobile with you, you may purchase a vehicle at a very reasonable price after your arrival. Prior to or after you get your car, you must get a COMNAVFORJAPAN operator's driver's license, and you must take an examination (given by the Licensing Section) which covers international road signs. You will receive guidance from PMO concerning insurance and registration. There is an annual road tax, running about \$75. Once every two years, the vehicle must be inspected in accordance with Japanese inspection requirements.

b. **Driving Under the Influence.** It is ABSOLUTELY ILLEGAL to operate a motor vehicle (to include motor scooter and bicycle) in Japan after drinking any alcoholic beverage. A .05 blood alcohol count will result in criminal prosecution. Any lesser amount will result, at a minimum, in a warning and an order not to operate the vehicle. Taxis are inexpensive in Iwakuni, and they provide a useful means of getting about if you have been drinking, or if you anticipate drinking.

c. **Professional Negligence.** The operation of a motor vehicle is considered to be a profession in Japan. Every operator of a motor vehicle is held to a high standard of care, and failure to exercise this degree of care constitutes negligence under Japanese law. All motor vehicle accident cases involving personal injury or death are closely scrutinized by Japanese law enforcement agencies and prosecution of a criminal charge is likely. Drivers must be aware of the results of intemperate operation and drive accordingly.

d. **Weapons.** Japanese laws are very restrictive and rigidly enforced relative to the ownership and possession of weapons. All weapons purchased in Japan or included in household effects (e.g., air rifles, firearms, ceremonial swords, large knives) must be registered with PMO and kept on the Air Station. During hunting seasons, approved hunting weapons (SHOTGUNS ONLY) may be utilized in lawfully designated hunting areas off-Station under strict regulations and control. It is a serious criminal offense to be in possession of any pistol or hand gun off the Station. Violators can receive five years of



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confinement and a fine of not more than 500,000 yen. Personnel living off Station are required to surrender all weapons to the Station Armory for safekeeping during the overseas tour. It is strongly recommended that you not bring any weapons to Japan.

## **F. COST OF LIVING**

It is not possible for the Air Station to make a detailed comparison of the cost of living here and your present cost of living. However, your salary and allowances should permit you to live overseas within your current budget without compromising your present level or standard of living. It must be noted, though, that the cost of living on the economy is steadily rising. Heavy dependence on the use of Japanese currency can prove to be burdensome as the dollar and yen exchange rates fluctuate with world market trends. Nonetheless, most civilian employees find that they are able to save money while living overseas without sacrificing their standard of living.

## **G. HOUSING**

### **1. *Government Quarters***

a. ***Family Housing.*** Civilian employees at the GS-12 level or above, accompanied by authorized family members, are eligible for government family housing. No rent is charged for on-base housing, and all utilities, except telephone, are provided at no cost to the occupants. There are currently over 456 family housing units available on Station to meet the housing needs of both military and civilian personnel. The majority of family housing units are very spacious and modern, averaging between 1,300 and 1,700 square feet, and equipped with dishwashers, garbage disposals, central air conditioning and heating. The size of your quarters will depend on your family size and composition. Waiting lists are maintained by grade and family size. Check with your sponsor for the current waiting period for on-base housing. Virtually all families must rent houses on the economy while waiting assignment to government quarters. (See Section G.2. for information on off-base rentals.)

b. ***Bachelor Quarters.*** Regardless of grade, command-sponsored civilian employees recruited from the United States and unaccompanied by family members, are eligible for bachelor quarters aboard the air station. Although the quarters are provided free of charge, there is a nominal charge for personal maid service, if such service is desired. Permanent quarters may be assigned immediately, if desired, or temporary accommodations in transient quarters may be obtained at a reimbursable charge basis. The permanent quarters are 2-story facilities with outside entrances. The rooms resemble small apartments and consist of a living room, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom totaling approximately 400 square feet of living space. The rooms contain only basic furniture. There is a laundry room in the facility with washers and dryers provided at no charge. There is also a storage room in the facility, however, it is small and space is extremely limited.

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2. **Off-Base Housing.** Employees, regardless of grade, may rent private housing off-base. Eligible accompanied personnel who occupy approved rentals are granted a living quarters allowance (LQA) which, in most cases, will cover the cost of rent and utilities. Unaccompanied personnel may be authorized a quarters allowance in the event they desire to reside off-base. Housing Referral Office, located in Building 603, maintains a list of current, non-discriminating vacancies and will provide any assistance possible in helping personnel locate suitable housing. It is suggested that you check with the Housing Referral Office at least weekly to inquire as to newly available rentals.

There are currently about 500 approved private rentals, most of which are within a two-mile radius of the Station. Because of the yen fluctuation, it is difficult to quote average prices for off-base housing. However, it is noted again that LQA should cover most or all expenses associated with living off-base.

3. **Furniture.** Government furniture at Iwakuni is intended for use on a temporary loan basis by newly arrived employees awaiting their household goods shipments, or by departing personnel whose household goods have already been shipped back to the States. Inventory generally includes bedroom sets, dining room sets, rugs, chairs, sofas, refrigerators, and stoves. Refrigerators and stoves are loaned on a non-temporary basis to command-sponsored accompanied personnel living off-base, until the employee moves on-base or rotates from the Station. Heating and air-conditioning devices are usually not provided in off-base housing. Gas, kerosene, and oil heaters are available on the local market and from transferring personnel. Air-conditioners are also available on the economy.

## **H. ALLOWANCES**

As noted earlier, command-sponsored employees living off-base are entitled to a Living Quarters Allowance, intended to reimburse the employee for substantially all costs of the private rental. Additionally, a Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance is authorized for personnel occupying temporary quarters on-base while awaiting permanent housing.

Employees are also provided a post allowance based on the difference between the cost of living in Iwakuni and the cost of living in Washington, D.C. The amount of this allowance is based on the employee's salary and number of family members, and fluctuates with the dollars to yen exchange rate.

## **I. MEDICAL AND DENTAL SERVICES**

The Branch Clinic provides, on a space available basis, general medical care to civilian employees and their family members. The cost of care is then billed to the patient or responsible family member.

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Specialty care is not routinely available. Specialists from the U.S. Naval Hospital, Yokosuka, Japan, visit periodically, based upon availability and need. This cannot be relied upon for continuing speciality care. Patients requiring special evaluation are aeromedically evacuated to the U.S. Naval Hospital, Yokosuka. Fees for medical and hospital care are set by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and are subject to change. For 1998, cost per outpatient visit is \$126.00. Patients admitted to USNH Yokosuka are presently charged at \$519.00 per day. Emergencies and patients requiring care beyond the capabilities of the Branch Clinic might be admitted to a local Japanese hospital. Japanese hospitals expect payment in full upon discharge.

Due to the limited capabilities of the Branch Clinic, all personnel are urged to ensure that medical conditions requiring specialty care are resolved prior to arriving at Iwakuni. There is strict overseas screening criteria applied to each prospective new person scheduled to arrive at MCAS Iwakuni. Every attempt is made to avoid receiving employees or family members requiring medical services beyond those offered routinely at the Branch Medical Clinic. Transportation, continuing care, admission to a Japanese hospital, or evacuation can quickly become severe financial hardships. Additionally, family members can become separated by several hundred miles.

If you must take any special medication, an initial supply should be brought with you. The clinic will not order medications not on its limited formulary. You must arrange for an ongoing supply at personal expense or be managed with a substitute drug.

Dental treatment for civilian employees is available for most types of dentistry on a fee reimbursable basis. The only services that are not available to civilians are orthodontics (braces) and prothetics (crowns, bridges, and dentures). The fees are based on CONUS national averages as provided by the American Dental Health Association to the Navy's Bureau of Medicine and Surgery. The local clinic does not set or have any control over the fees that are charged. You can request an estimate of charges before consenting to any treatment in the clinic. If you have a dental insurance policy, you may submit your billing statement for any eligible reimbursement to you after you have paid the bill in full to the Treasurer of the United States.

## **J. SHOPPING FACILITIES AND SERVICES AVAILABLE**

1. ***Marine Corps Exchange.*** U.S. civilian employees and their family members are authorized to shop at the exchange and its concessionaires. The exchange offers a household store, seven-day stores, furniture store, retail sales (including clothing, jewelry and camera departments), toyland, sports store, sound shop and a gas station. Items not regularly stocked can be ordered through the Exchange catalog or the Exchange Special Order Desk.

2. ***The Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA).*** The DeCA maintains stock of more than 5,000 line items from which to choose. Meat is shipped frozen from the States, and a wide variety of frozen food, canned goods, and household items are in stock. Fresh

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fruits and vegetables from the United States are available, and the local economy provides a wide selection of produce as well. Only personnel who are authorized patrons with uniformed services identification and privilege card may enter the Commissary. Family members under 10 years of age may accompany an ID card holder. Authorized personnel shall not sell or give away Commissary purchases to individuals or groups not entitled to Commissary privileges. Personnel are prohibited from using Commissary purchases to support a private business. These prohibitions do not apply to food served to guests in the homes of authorized personnel or to limited and reasonable donation to acceptable charitable organization food drives.

3. **Concessionaires.** The Exchange provides a wide variety of services through its concessionaires. Among these services are a florist, tailor, cleaners, appliance repair/rental, barber and beauty shops, wrap shop, watch repair, portrait studio, optical shop, gift shops, messaging services, bike rental and a food court. Prices generally are much lower than one is accustomed to in the States. Also, the Exchange has a contractor-managed garage where automobile repair services and inspections are available.

4. **Japanese Stores.** Iwakuni and neighboring cities provide endless shopping possibilities. Virtually anything unobtainable on base can be purchased on the economy, and personnel who have been around the area for awhile will be pleased to share with you handy shopping tips and guides. The only difficulties frequently encountered are with some women's clothing and shoes, and large-sized men's clothing.

5. **Catalogues.** Although you will probably purchased primarily from the exchange and the local stores, you may occasionally have need to order from Stateside catalogues (e.g., JC Penny's). Employees are encouraged to bring their favorite catalogues with them.

## K. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Department of Defense Dependents School.** Matthew C. Perry School is located on the Air Station, providing quality education to dependent children at no cost to command-sponsored personnel. Qualified civilian teachers are recruited for the United States, and teach all ages, from kindergarten to twelfth grade. Specialists are available in art, music, physical education, and Japanese culture. In addition, specialist in reading, learning disabilities, speech therapy, and ESL are available for students in need of these special services. Numerous sports, clubs and extracurricular activities are available to the students. There is also a pre-school aboard the base, for three- and four-year olds. The Matthew C. Perry School is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools in the United States.

It should be noted that there are no special schools or recreational facilities for emotionally disturbed or mentally retarded children. Families with children with serious educational problems or who require special teaching programs should not consider employment at MCAS Iwakuni.

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2. **Local Schools.** In addition to the facilities on base, Japanese kindergartens (Yochien) are available for the pre-schooler. Rates are low, and language is seldom a problem. American pre-school children soon learn to communicate with their Japanese schoolmates, and often become their parents' personal interpreters.

3. **Educational Services Office.** The Education Services Office (ESO) provides Air Station residents with quality off-duty education programs. A number of traditional and non-traditional education programs are available. Traditional education programs are offered through Central Texas College, the University of Maryland, and Troy State University.

Central Texas College offers courses leading to a certificate of completion or an associate's degree. Courses offered include: law enforcement, computer science, and child development. The University of Maryland offers courses leading to a certificate, an associates degree or a bachelors degree. Courses offered include business, management, science, mathematics, English, sociology, psychology, history, and Japanese language.

Both Central Texas College and the University of Maryland schedule five 8-week terms per academic year.

Two graduate programs are offered on Station, Troy State University offers graduate level courses leading to a Master of Science degree in Management. There are six 8-week terms in the Troy State University academic year, making program completion possible within one year. Mississippi State University offers the Masters of Business Administration. There are five 8-week terms per year and the program can be completed in two years. Civilian employees are responsible for any tuition charges, and VA benefits may be used.

Many colleges and universities offer college level courses through correspondence. The courses are designed to parallel the resident classes. The ESO has a catalog of Independent Study Courses and External Degree Programs. College credit can also be earned through the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) Subject Standardized Test. These tests are offered weekly and study material is available.

The ESO is an authorized test center for the graduate Management Test (GMAT), Graduate Examinations (GRE), American College Testing (ACT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), General Education Development Test (GED), and many certification exams.

## **L. RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

Navy chaplains are assigned to the Air Station. Normally, there will be one Catholic and two Protestant chaplains. In addition, there are two chaplains assigned to Marine Air Group-12, who assist with the chapel program. Religious services are conducted at the

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Station chapel. Also religious education classes are offered for both adults and children. A lay leader conducts Jewish services. The area Jewish chaplain visits on a quarterly schedule. Lay services are scheduled for the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints and the Church of Christ. There are many opportunities for bible studies, retreats, marriage enrichment programs, and Community Relation projects.

Chaplains are available for personal as well as family counseling. They are here to provide whatever pastoral assistance you and your family may need.

## **M. RECREATION**

MWR Recreation Division offers the air station community a varied program of wholesome and constructive leisure time activities and trips. In addition to a year-round schedule of intramural sports, employees and their family members may take advantage of the station's gym and two fitness centers, bowling center, scuba program, outdoor swimming pools and a year round Olympic size indoor pool, skeet range, theater, nine-hole golf course, wood and auto hobby shops, photo lab and the arts and crafts center. The Information, Travel and Tours Office provides and arranges reservations, trips and tours to off-base recreational, cultural and entertainment activities from Sumo Wrestling, Tokyo Fun Trip, hotshi bath, to many fun and exciting places to see and visit in Japan. Recreational Fitness handles special classes like gymnastics, martial arts, personal training, running club and trips (e.g., hiking, fishing, camping, canoeing and skiing). Recreation's Youth Activities offers both school age care and open recreational programs. Throughout the year, several cultural exchanges with neighboring Japanese organizations and youth sports teams (e.g., soccer, basketball, t-ball and baseball) are offered along with summer camp. The Teen Center travels extensively throughout Japan visiting other bases and many of the most popular entertainment spots. Numerous sports programs are offered also for teens, in conjunction with the DoDEA school.

## **N. TRANSPORTATION**

1. **Public Transportation.** As noted earlier, train transportation in Japan is excellent. Fares are reasonable, trains are scheduled frequently on all major routes, and schedules are strictly observed. Language is seldom a problem, as the Japanese National Railway has gone to considerable length to facilitate travel by non-Japanese speaking people. Bus service in the area is also good, and the Joint Reception Center will provide information on getting to know the routes, schedules, and operations of the buses. Commercial taxis are inexpensive and drivers generally understand enough English to get you where you want to go.

2. **Privately Owned Vehicles.** Section E.3.a., above, stated that your travel orders may authorize you to ship your privately owned vehicle at Government expense. However, it is important to know several things before deciding to ship a car to Japan. Only vehicles manufactured before 31 March 1976 are allowed to be shipped, and all cars

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shipped to Japan are subject to a comprehensive safety engineering inspection, including emissions measurement. The vehicle must meet California emission control standards and must be on the Government of Japan's list of certified vehicles. If you decide to ship a car to Japan, narrow roads dictate that you would be better served by shipping a small car. If the vehicle you ship has a lien upon it, the Government requires that you have written permission from the lien holder to move the vehicle to Japan. Also, you should check your insurance policy to be certain that it provides desired coverage in transit and after arrival in Japan. Overland transportation of privately-owned vehicles is not authorized for DoD civilians. You will be required to pick up your vehicle at the port of delivery, either at Yokohama, or at Yokosuka, both approximately 600 miles from Iwakuni. Cars shipped from the U.S. must have personal and property liability insurance with a U.S. company of your choice as well as personal liability insurance with a Japanese company. Also bear in mind the difficulties encountered in trying to obtain spare parts and competent repair work for American automobiles.

If you decide to purchase a car after arriving in Iwakuni, expect to pay \$1,000-\$2,500 for vehicle in good condition with two years of Japanese Compulsory insurance (a requirement for all cars in Japan). Gasoline prices at the base gas station are about what you are accustomed to paying in the U.S., while buying gasoline on the economy is about triple the cost.

Motorcycles are authorized on Station and in town. In general, the same licensing procedures are followed (see Section E.3.a., above), except that an actual motorcycle riding test is given.

3. ***Car Rental.*** Cars and vans can be rented from MWR.

## **O. MAIL AND TELEPHONE SERVICE**

1. The Station's Fleet Post Office (FPO) facilities offer substantially the same services as post offices in the States. Postage is the same, and you may mail letters and parcels worldwide. Gifts valued above \$100 are subject to duty by the receiver. Command-sponsored personnel will be assigned a post office box, which can be obtained for you by your sponsor before your arrival in Iwakuni.

2. Telephones are provided, on a monthly-fee basis, to all command-sponsored personnel residing in government housing. The Family Service Center offers a free phone for 60 days. For employees living off-base, the Station Telephone Office can assist you in making necessary arrangement for a telephone from the local Japanese phone company. There are also several International Subscriber Dialing (ISD) green phones available around the base. By using these telephones, you can easily make direct dial, collect, or credit card calls worldwide.

## **P. BANKING, CURRENCY, AND TAXES**

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1. **Banking Facilities.** There are two American facilities aboard the Air Station for your banking needs, one a full-service bank, and the other a credit union, both with a wide range of services.

2. **Currency and Rates of Exchange.** While U.S. currency is used almost exclusively aboard the Air Station, some concessionaires do accept yen. The exchange, commissary, and Officers' Club will accept payment by check. Exchange one currency for the other may be accomplished either at the full-service bank, at one of the other authorized locations on base, or at a Japanese bank. The exchange rate fluctuates with great frequency, and your sponsor can advise you of the current yen rate.

3. **Taxes.** U.S. government personnel overseas must pay U.S. Federal income tax. Regular payroll deductions are made from your paycheck and you are required to file Federal tax returns. Temporary Lodging Allowance, Living Quarters Allowance, and Post Allowance are not subject to Federal income tax. No payroll deductions are made automatically for state income taxes. You may complete forms (available at the Civilian Human Resources Office) which will effect such deductions. There are no Japanese taxes imposed upon any income from employment on the Air Station. However, Japanese taxes may be levied against any income from outside employment, investment, or property in Japan.

## **Q. WORK SCHEDULE AND LEAVE ACCRUAL**

The normal work schedule for MOST civilian employees at the Air Station is Monday through Friday, 0800-1630, with one-half hour for lunch. HOWEVER, CIVILIANS MAY WORK 0730-1630 HOURS WITH A 60 MINUTE LUNCH PERIOD. Paid holidays are the same as those in the States. No Japanese holidays are observed.

The only difference between annual leave in the States and annual leave overseas is that employees can accrue up to 360 hours of annual leave while overseas, as opposed to maximum leave accrual of 240 hours in the U.S.

Home leave is a special leave authorized to employees who serve overseas and is accrued at the rate of five days for each 12 months of service in Iwakuni. When an employee has established an entitlement to the use of home leave by completing 24 months of continuous services overseas, s/he may be granted accumulated home leave at any future time for leave taken in the U.S., the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any U.S. territory or possession, provided that s/he will be returning to service overseas following the use of home leave. The CHRO will provide you detailed information on the use of home leave upon your arrival.

## **R. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILY MEMBERS AT MCAS IWAKUNI**



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U. S. appropriated fund jobs are limited. Although some family members may have hiring preference over non-family members and non-veterans, the Air Station is unable to guarantee employment for all family members seeking jobs. There are approximately 130 GS/WG positions at Iwakuni, the majority of which are of a professional or technical nature. Some clerical vacancies arise occasionally, but for the most part, family members should also seek non-appropriated fund employment with the Marine Corps Community Services Department. The Civilian Human Resources Office conducts monthly employment orientation briefings and offers assistance in helping family members secure employment after arrival on Station. Family members seeking employment are strongly encouraged to attend the orientation briefing soon after arrival.

## **S. MAKING THE MOVE**

1. *Preliminary Arrangements for Travel.* A sponsor has been designated for you. S/he will provide you with current information on working and living conditions, answer any questions you may have, meet you upon arrival, and otherwise assist you in making the transition from the United States to Iwakuni, Japan, an easy one. If, after your selection and notification, you have not heard from your sponsor, you should inquire through your processing office or the:

Civilian Human Resources Office  
MCB Smedley D. Bultler  
Iwakuni Satellite Office  
PSC 561 BOX 251  
FPO AP 96310-0251  
DSN 253-6873  
CM 011-81-6117-53-6873  
EMAIL [takeshimak@iwakuni.usmc.mil](mailto:takeshimak@iwakuni.usmc.mil)

The necessary arrangements for your travel overseas will be made by your processing personnel office. You and your family members will be furnished information and instructions regarding passports, visas, physical examinations, immunizations, family members' entry approval, issuance of travel orders, baggage allowance, shipment of household goods and automobile, and other pertinent details. You should ensure that your processing office keeps the CHRO at Iwakuni informed of your travel itinerary. Be sure, also, to advise your sponsor so that s/he may make arrangement for temporary housing prior to your arrival.

You are advised to check with customs on items prohibited for import into Japan (e.g., treasonous or pornographic materials, non-prescription narcotics, weapons). Especially in travel to Japan, excessive baggage will prove to be cumbersome. You should strictly adhere to the allowance per current directives. Porter service at airports and train stations is minimal and expensive.

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The Air Mobility Command (AMC) flight from Los Angeles, CA (LAX) should be your first choice because it arrives on the Air Station. This eliminates all train, hotel, and other expenses associated with commercial air travel. If you decide to fly commercial, it is suggested that you and each family member obtain approximately \$300 worth of Japanese currency to defray the cost of meals, transportation, accommodations, and any unforeseen expenses enroute to Iwakuni. After your arrival at the Air Station, you may submit a claim for reimbursement of travel and transportation expenses incurred while in an official travel status. Properly itemize your expenses, keep a detailed record of departure and arrival times, layovers, and costs, and keep all receipts.

2. **Pets.** You are strongly advised not to bring pets to Japan. Before deciding to bring your pet to Japan, it would be wise to keep in mind that having Fido or Whiskers along will keep you from being assigned housing in any of the new mid-rises on base. Additionally, most landlords in town are reluctant to rent to tenants with pets. If, after considering these issues, as well as the expense to you of shipping your pet to Japan via commercial carrier, you decide to bring your pet with you, please ensure that you meet all Japanese quarantine regulations. Further information on these regulations may be obtained through your local veterinary office, commercial airlines, travel agency, or by writing or calling:

U.S. Army Veterinary Clinic, Iwakuni, Japan  
PSC 561 BOX 91  
FPO AP 98343  
(DSN) 253-3588/4622

3. **Arrival in Japan.** If you arrive in Iwakuni via an Air Mobility Command (AMC) flight, your sponsor will meet you at the terminal and, after clearing customs, you will begin your orientation to the Air Station. Many people, however, arrive via commercial air into Osaka International Airport. While in flight, an attendant will explain and assist you in completing a customs form. Once landed, you deplane through a jetway and into the arrival concourse. There are prominently marked English signs at the main terminal end of the arrival concourse. You proceed down to the second floor and are processed through Quarantine And Immigration. (A pet would be cleared at this point.) Once cleared, proceed down to the ground floor to claim your checked baggage. There are signs on the baggage carousels that provide information necessary for you to clear customs. "Nothing to declare" will be the norm, unless items have been brought to Japan for resale. After clearing customs, you will be ready to depart the airport.

Depending on what time you finish clearing customs, you will either spend the night in Osaka (usually at the New Osaka hotel or at Osaka Tokyo Hotel), or you will proceed to the Shin-Osaka station to catch a train to Shin-Iwakuni. Now would be a good time to call your sponsor. S/he will be able to advise you on which course to take. Northwest Airlines has agreed to assist incoming personnel who arrive too late to connect with the last train to Shin-Iwakuni, and if you decide to stay in Osaka overnight, check in at the Northwest counter for assistance. In order to call your sponsor, use a yellow or green

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telephone, available throughout the terminal. Insert at least three 100 yen coins to make your call.

4. ***Shin-Osaka to Shin-Iwakuni.*** Once you have taken ground transportation (taxi, limo, bus) to the Shin-Osaka train station, you will find that there are three classes of seating available on the train. You will want to purchase seats in the "green car," which is first class reserved. There is a separate "green car office" at Shin-Osaka, and at least one employee there will speak enough English to arrange for your tickets to Shin-Iwakuni. The green cars on each train are numbers 11 and 12, and they offer wider seats, rotating seats, and more space for luggage. Expect to pay about 14,000 yen from Shin-Osaka to Shin-Iwakuni. As you pass through the gate to go to your track, your ticket will be punched. Do not lose that ticket!! You will have to surrender it as you leave the gate at Shin-Iwakuni.

5. ***Shin-Iwakuni to MCAS Iwakuni.*** You will find telephones in the lobby at Shin-Iwakuni. If your sponsor is not already there to meet you, call (using a red phone) to let her/him know you are on your way to the Air Station. Travel from the Shin station to MCAS Iwakuni is best accomplished via taxis which are located outside the station. Make sure that the taxi is authorized to enter the Air Station by looking for a white decal with the letters "MCAS" on the front left bumper. Cost will be approximately 3,000 yen. Ask the driver to take you to the Billeting office. Notify your sponsor of your arrival, and s/he will assist you in checking in and getting oriented. On the following day, check in at the Joint Reception Center.

When dialing the base from Osaka, dial 0827-21-4171, and ask the operator who answers for the desired extension. When dialing the base from Shin-Iwakuni, dial 21-4171, and again ask the operator for the desired extension.

## **T. FIVE YEAR LIMITATION ON OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT**

The 5-year limitation on employment in foreign areas allows for the continuous assessment of civilian workforce requirements and promotes the efficiency of worldwide operations. In addition, the policy provides DoD a tool to allow its more capable employees in the United States the opportunity to accept positions in foreign areas as part of their career development. Therefore, non-family member U.S. citizen employees agree, as a condition of employment overseas, to subsequently accept assignments to positions in the United States. Individual case-by-case extensions beyond the 5-year limit may be granted in extremely rare situations. Case-by-case extensions are intended to provide short-term management flexibility based on local needs and conditions and are not intended to provide for permanent employment in the foreign area. Detailed information may be obtained from your processing office and from the Rotation Agreement you will be required to sign.

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## **U. TOUR OF DUTY**

The initial tour of duty for MCAS Iwakuni is 36 months. You will sign a Transportation Agreement to that effect.

V. USCS EMPLOYEES ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE FROM THE SERVICING CHRO OFFICE, BUILDING 360. TRAINING INCLUDES FORMAL TRAINING ON AND OFF STATION, CORRESPONDENCE COURSES, FORMAL COURSES SPONSORED BY THE CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM, COMPUTER COURSES PRESENTED BY I S M O, AND COURSES PRESENTED BY THE NAF DIVISION, MCCS. SPECIALITY TRAINING REQUIRES CERTAIN EMPLOYEES IN SELECT OCCUPATIONAL FIELDS TO COMPLETE FORMAL TRAINING IN OKINAWA, YOKOSUKA AND IN AMERICA.

## ***NOTES:***